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ABSTRACT

This survey was conducted at John Abbott College to gauge teachers' responses to issues concerning their job satisfaction, interaction with colleagues, perceptions of student abilities, and perceptions concerning union negotiating priorities and areas of conflict within the institutional environment. Of the 75 teachers contacted, 47 returned questionnaires, for a response rate of 63%. Major findings were as follows: (1) for females, "more interesting work" would be the most important factor if they were considering another job, whereas "higher pay and better benefits" would be the most important consideration for men; (2) less than half of the respondents chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity, although 100% of the non-permanent teachers in the sample chose teaching as their most satisfying activity; (3) 51.1% indicated that maintaining some form of interaction with their immediate colleagues at the college was "very important"; (4) over 65% considered contact with persons at the college, other than departmental colleagues, to be "somewhat important" or "very important"; (5) 80.9% of the respondents found students to be highly or somewhat motivated to learn; (6) respondents were almost evently divided in their opinions of whether incoming students were adequately or inadequately prepared; (7) 40.4% of the respondents indicated that salary should be stressed most in contract negotiations, whereas 59.6% chose non-salary related issues as the most important; and (8) 55.3% chose administration policy as the area in which they would make the most changes if given the chance. The survey instrument and sample comments are attached. (JMC)

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The Labour Process of Teaching at John Abbott College (Part One)

A survey by
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Named after Sir John Abbott, Canada's third prime minister, John Abbott College primarily serves the West Island community of Montreal. Over 4800 students are enrolled in the day division (1988) and about 2000 in continuing education. As one of 47 Cegeps (College d'enseignement generale et professionnel) in Quebec, John Abbott offers two types of program: Two year pre-university programs and three year career or professional programs designed to lead directly to the labour market.

There are 375 teachers at the college. Before conducting intensive interviews I decided to circulate a questionnaire to gauge teachers' responses to certain issues that have been raised concerning their job satisfaction, their interaction with colleagues, their perceptions of student abilities, and their perceptions concerning union negotiating priorities and areas of conflict within the institutional environment. The survey questionnaire was distributed through the internal mail to seventy-five teachers at the college. This was a systematic sample, every fifth person on the current seniority list selected to receive the questionnaire (see appendix). I followed up with a telephone call one week after the questionnaire was distributed. There were forty-seven returned questionnaires for a response rate of 63%.

Table 1

Full-time Enrolment in Major College Programs, 1983-84

	Enrolment	%
Pre-university (Academic) Programs		
Health, pure and applied sciences	27,900	18
Social sciences and commerce	40,300	25
Arts	4,800	3
Language and literature	4,400	3
Other	1,200	1
Total	78,600	50
Career (Technical) Programs		
Biological technologies	13,600	9
Physical technologies	19,300	12
Social technologies	8,800	6
Administrative technologies	31,300	20
Applied Arts	4,800	3
Language and literature	100	--
Other	100	--
Total	78,000	50
Grand Total	156,600	100

Adapted from: Le Quebec Statistique, Edition 1985-1986, p. 440-443.

Table 2

Profile of Survey Respondents

Sex	Percent
Male	68.1%
Female	31.9
Total	100.00 n=47

Job status	Percent
Permanent (tenured)	93.6%
Non-permanent (untenured)	6.4
Total	100.00 n=47

Education level	Percent
Bachelors	6.4%
Masters	66.0
Doctorate	25.5
Technical certification or career experience without academic degree	2.1
Total	100.00 n=47

Table 2 continued - Profile of Survey Respondents

Age Category	Percent
24 and under	2.1%
25-34	8.5
35-44	55.3
45-54	27.7
55 or over	6.4
Total	100.00 n=47

Years at Cegep	Percent
0-5 yrs.	8.5%
6-10 yrs.	14.9
11-15 yrs.	46.8
15 or more yrs.	29.8
Total	100.00

Experience in teaching at other levels of the educational system	Percent (yes)	Percent (no)	Total
Elementary school	8.5%	91.5%	100.
High school	34.0	66.0	100.
University	61.7	38.3	100.
Private School	14.9	85.1	100.
Technical School	8.5	91.5	100.

Table 2 continued - Profile of Survey Respondents

Discipline Area	Percent
Business Sciences	4.5%
Dramatic Arts	4.5
English	11.4
Health Science	11.4
Humanities	11.4
Mathematics	9.1
Natural Science	11.4
Physical Science	4.5
Social Science	27.3
Technology	4.5
Total	100.00 n=47

Question #1

If you were going to take a job other than teaching, which of the following would be the most important factor in your consideration?

(1) Higher pay and better benefits

(2) More interesting work

(3) More security

(4) More respect and recognition

(5) Other: _____

The first question attempted to gauge the relative importance of money, interesting work, job security, respect and recognition, as factors which teachers would consider if they were to take a job other than teaching. The question was designed as an indirect way of assessing the effects of salary cutbacks, deteriorating working conditions, reduced job security, and alleged negative public perceptions of Cegep teachers as might possibly be indicated by their response to this question.

Table 3

Factors in taking a job other than teaching

Factor	Percent
Higher pay and better benefits	38.3%
More interesting work	34.0
More security	4.3
More respect and recognition	17.0
Other	6.4
Total	100.0

Higher pay would be the most important factor in taking another job for 38.3% (Table 3) of the respondents to this question. However, a significant difference in response to this question emerged when responses were broken down by sex.

Table 4

Factors in taking job other than teaching by sex

Factor	% Male	% Female
Higher pay & benefits	46.9%	20.0%
More interesting work	25.0	53.3
More security	0.0	13.3
More respect & recognition	21.9	6.7
Other	6.3	6.7
Total	100.1*	100.0
	n=32	

* due to rounding error

Table 4 shows that, for females, more interesting work would be the most important factor if they were considering a job other than teaching whereas higher pay and better benefits would be the most important factor for men. One might speculate as to the reasons for these differences. For men, the concern for higher salaries might reflect a situation where they are the primary source of income for the family whereas the salary for female teachers might represent a second income where there are two earners in the family.

However, females were more concerned over job security in any possible decision they would make whereas this is of no concern at all to male respondents.

More respect and recognition would be an important factor for males in such a decision but much less important for females. Again, one might speculate as to the greater emphasis on respect and recognition by males in considering a job other than teaching. In the interviews which follow one female respondent argues that "many male teachers (have become) unhappy and bored with their profession. (They) have become obsessed with measuring their worth and happiness by the amount of money they have, by their rank, by the 'pat on the back'. Unfortunately for these people, the Cegep does not offer these benefits adequately. Therefore these people are unable to measure their self-worth via socialization and become frustrated." This perceived lack of respect and recognition might account for the fact that many male teachers will abandon teaching for administration jobs if they have the chance. It may also account for the fact that many teachers have a strong avocational interest outside teaching or a second source of income. The importance of activities outside teaching will be demonstrated in the responses to the next question in the survey.

Table 5

Factors in taking a job other than teaching
by level of educational attainment

Factor	% BA	% MA	% PHD	% Other
Higher pay & benefits	33.3%	38.7%	41.7%	
More interesting work	66.7	38.7	16.7	
More security			8.3	100.00%
More respect & recognition		16.1	25.0	
Other		6.5	8.3	
	100.00 n=3	100.00 n=31	100.00 n=12	100.00 n=1

Table 5 indicates the response to the survey question by level of educational qualifications. In considering a job other than teaching, the desire for more interesting work is a relatively unimportant factor for teachers holding PhDs in comparison to those holding MAs or BAs. Again, one might speculate as to the reasons for this. Respondents holding doctorates can pursue their research interests at the Cegep level without the intense competition that one sometimes finds at the university level. Their research efforts may, indeed, complement their work as teachers whereas respondents with lower educational qualifications are engaged primarily in

teaching without compensatory outlets for creativity. I should stress that this is purely speculation on my part.

Not surprisingly, non-permanent (non-tenured) teachers chose more security as being the most important factor if they were to consider a job other than teaching. Two of 3 non-permanents chose this category. One chose more respect and recognition as the most important factor in taking a job other than teaching. Since the imposition of provincial government decrees in 1983, it has become more difficult for a Cegep teacher to get tenure. A union survey of 21 Cegeps revealed that:

Year	Number of teachers granted tenure (Permanence)
82/83	169
83/84	22
84/85	27

Source: INFO-FNEEQ, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1986.

The provincial government established tighter guidelines for the acquisition of tenure because of the high costs of this job security provision at a time when student enrolments were declining dramatically throughout the province. A tenured teacher who is laid off is entitled to 80% of his/her salary for as long as it takes

to re-absorb them into the system. This represented a form of guaranteed income for laid-off teachers which might discourage them from seeking other types of employment. With little likelihood of a dramatic increase in enrolments the government faced a continuing drain on the education budget from teachers the system no longer needed. Increasing costs also provided an incentive to rely on part-time teachers who do not enjoy the same range of benefits as those who have acquired tenure.

For example, non-tenured and part-time teachers often find it necessary to go from Cegep to Cegep to get courses and sometimes don't know what their workload will be until a few days before the term starts. Non-tenured teachers are very often assigned courses that no one else wants to teach and at awkward times. They have greater difficulty getting professional development leaves and are not eligible for deferred salary leaves. They are not guaranteed any part of their salary should they be laid-off. They must rely on unemployment insurance. The salary of non-tenured teachers depends on a complex calculation of their individual workload which sometimes results in a lower salary for them in comparison to a tenured teacher who has exactly the same workload. In some colleges, non-tenured teachers do not have an office and find it difficult to have access to services (xerox

machine, etc.).

The trend toward a two-tiered system has caused friction among teachers, which manifests itself when the time comes to set union negotiating priorities. The precarious job security of the non-tenured teachers has thus become an important issue in negotiations with the provincial government although many tenured teachers would prefer that the unions concentrate on salary issues.

Other Findings

There were no significant differences in response to this question by age category or length of service at John Abbott. Higher pay was more important to teachers who had previously taught at the high school level (50%) than for those who had never taught at the high school level (32.3%).

John Abbott teachers who had, at one time or another, also taught at the university level were less likely to choose more interesting work as a factor in taking another job (26.7%) than teachers who had never taught at the university level (44.4%). For John Abbott teachers who had some experience in teaching at the university level (61.7% of the entire sample) 24.1% chose more respect and recognition as important factors in taking another job whereas only 5.6% of teachers who had not taught at the university level (38.3% of the total sample) chose this response. This again suggests some feeling among teachers who have taught at the university level that their efforts do not provide adequate respect and recognition.

The difference in response to this question by discipline are not significant because of the small number of cases for each discipline (with the possible exception

of social sciences where 50% of respondents chose more pay as the most important factor in taking another job compared to 33.3% who chose more interesting work as the most important factor - social science respondents made up 27.3% of the total sample).

Summary

In response to this question respondents indicate that higher pay and more interesting work would be the most important factors in their consideration of a job other than teaching. However, important differences exist in the response to this question by sex, level of educational qualifications, and job status.

Question #2

Which of the following activities provides you with the most satisfaction? One answer only please.

(1) Your work as a teacher

(2) Non-teaching related activities at the college

(3) Community or political involvements outside the college

(4) Hobbies, sideline jobs, exercise (other than sex), reading, courses, travel, or other such activities outside the college

The second question attempted to gauge teacher job satisfaction and the priority they attach to teaching in comparison with other activities.

Table 6

Most satisfying activity

Activity	Percent
Teaching activity	48.9%
Non-teaching activities at college	10.6
Activities outside the college	40.4
Total	99.9* n=47

*due to rounding error

Less that half of the respondents chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. Note that not a single teacher chose community or political involvements outside the college as their most satisfying activity. This might suggest a certain political apathy on the part of teachers or perhaps an unwillingness to be identified in any way with political activity. In the interviews which follow some teachers are unwilling to give opinions on political issues at the college.

There were no significant differences in the response to this question by sex.

Not surprisingly, 100% of non-permanent teachers in the sample chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. Presumably, they would like to do more of it and under more secure circumstances.

There were some interesting differences which emerged in the responses to this question by level of educational qualification.

Table 7

Most satisfying activity by educational attainment

Activity	% BAs	% MAs	% PhDs	% Others
Teaching activity	66.7%	35.5%	75.0%	100%
Non-teaching activities at the college		12.9	8.3	
Activities outside the college	33.3	51.6	16.7	
Total	100.0 n=3	100.0 n=31	100.0 n=12	100.0 n=1

Table 7 indicates that teaching is the most satisfying activity for 75% of the teachers holding a doctorate whereas this is the case for only 35.5% of teachers holding a Masters degree. Over half of the teachers holding Masters degrees, chose their activities outside the college as being most satisfying while only 16.7% of teachers with a doctoral degree chose this category. This finding is interesting because it is often assumed that teachers with a doctoral degree would be more interested in research than teaching. Teachers at John Abbott who hold a doctorate are entitled to an extra

$3,314.00 per year in premium for this accomplishment. This might account for their greater satisfaction with teaching if money is a motivator in these matters.

There were some interesting differences which emerged in response to this question by length of service at John Abbott.

Table 8

Most satisfying activity by years of service

Activity	% 0-5 yrs.	% 6-10 yrs.	% 11-15 yrs.	% 15
Teaching activity	75.0%	28.6%	40.9%	61.5%
Non-teaching activity at the college		28.6	4.5	15.4
Activities outside the college	25.0	42.9	54.5	23.1
Total	100.0 n=4	100.1* n=7	99.9* n=22	100.0 n=13

*due to rounding error

Table 8 indicates that teachers at the mid-point of their teaching careers (11-15 years of service) find activities outside the college more satisfying than their teaching activity. This might be some indication of the phenomenon known as "burnout" which is alleged to affect many teachers at the mid-point of their careers. This group represents 46.8% of the total sample. There are a variety of possible explanations for the priority of outside activities for teachers with this length of service, some of which are dealt with extensively in the

interviews which follow. For example, one teacher complains that "there is very little recognition from the administration for good work. You do not get more money because you are doing a better job as a teacher. There is no promotional system. Every year teachers get an increase (in pay) but that increase is virtually the same whether you did a good job or a bad job. Under those conditions it is hard sometimes to remain motivated." The "unstaged" nature of a teachers' career, the fact that there may be little variation from year to year in course preparation and materials taught, the negative public perception of teachers, the effects of provincial government budget restraints, the effects of aging, and a feeling that the original goals of the Cegep have been compromised, were all cited as factors which account for declining teacher motivation and a greater interest in activities outside the college.

Table 8 indicates that for teachers with five years or less of service their work as teachers is their most satisfying activity as is the case with teachers with fifteen or more years of service. The fact that only 23.1% of teachers with 15 or more years of service chose activities outside of the college as their most satisfying activity suggests that they may have somehow come to terms with their role as teachers.

Other empirical research tends to support this conclusion (Coppard, Gill and Lowther, 1985). In addition to possible cohort effects, Coppard, Gill and Lowther cite other factors to explain this phenomenon such as "increasing financial rewards with age (not applicable in the case of Cegep teachers), improving work environments for older workers through the seniority system, and increasing opportunities for dissatisfied teachers to find other non-teaching work or to become school administrators" (p. 522).

Another possible explanation for the age relationship may be due to a decline in the standards and expectations of teachers who, with the passage of time, become satisfied with fewer rewards.

Other Findings

Cegep teachers who had taught at some other level in the educational system were somewhat more likely to choose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. Fifty-six point three percent of former high school teachers chose this category, 55.2% of teachers who had taught at university chose this category, 57.1% of those who had taught at private schools chose this category. However, only 25% of former technical school teachers chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. One might speculate as to the reasons for the differences between Cegep teachers who had taught at some other level of the educational system and thos who had taught only the Cegep level. Teaching in a Cegep might be viewed quite favourably when compared to experiences at other levels of the educational system. There is more autonomy and more control over the choice of materials used in the classroom. This would certainly be a positive factor for teachers who have had to work in the more restricted atmosphere of the elementary or high school classroom. For university teachers the Cegep might provide a refuge from the necessity of publishing scholarly articles ('publish or perish'). In the case of teachers who had formerly taught at technical schools, there is the possibility that they have craft interests outside of the college that satisfy them more than their

work as teachers. Again, I should emphasize that this is simply speculation on my part.

Although the number of cases by discipline was too small to make any definitive statement with regards to the response to this question, there is something of a pattern when the responses in related disciplines are combined. For example, teachers in mathematics (75%), business science (100%), technologies (100%), natural science (60%), physical science (50%), chose non-teaching activities at the college or activities outside the college as their most satisfying activity while teachers in dramatic arts (100%), english (80%), humanities (60%), social sciences (58.3%), chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. This response may have something to do with the nature and methods of the courses taught. There is more latitude with regards to the content of courses and methods used in english, humanities, and social science courses than there is in mathematics, technologies, and science courses, which follow rather strict guidelines set down by the Ministry of Education in Quebec City. In subject areas where there is little room for variation or experimentation in content or method the ability to remain motivated and derive satisfaction from the activity of teaching is more problematic.

Summary

Less than half of the respondents to this question chose their work as teachers as their most satisfying activity. However, there were important differences in response to this question by level of educational qualification, by length of service, by job status, by previous job experience, and by discipline taught.

Question #3

How important is it to you to have regular contact, exchange of views, or other forms of interaction with your departmental colleagues?

(1) Very important

(2) Somewhat important

(3) Not too important

(4) Not at all important

The third question attempted to gauge the relative importance of interaction with peers at work. In the interviews, one of the teachers argues that

> "there is too much isolation at the college (now). Contact with fellow teachers is restricted. I remember such things as 'faculty friday' where teachers from the whole college met and conversed. This has stopped unfortunately and teachers have

retreated into departmental solitude."

The notion that teachers are isolated in their offices without sufficient contact with their peers has been a continuing theme in union publications (INFO - FNEEQ, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1986). It is argued that this lack of contact contributes to declining motivation and "pedagogical individualism". The question was designed to discover whether contact with peers is, in fact, important to teachers, and to gauge just how important it actually is.

Table 9

Interaction with departmental colleagues

Importance	Percent
Very important	51.1%
Somewhat important	27.7
Not too important	21.3
Total	100.1
	n=47

Table 9 indicates that interaction with departmental colleagues is quite important to over 80% of the respondents. None of the respondents felt that contact with colleagues was not at all important. However, there was an interesting difference in response to this question by level of educational qualification.

Table 10

Interaction with departmental colleagues

Importance	% BAs	% MAs	% PhDs	% Others
Very important	66.7%	54.8%	33.3%	100.0%
Somewhat important	33.3	29.0	25.0	
Not too important	0.0	16.1	41.7	
Total	100.0 n=3	99.9* n=31	100.0 n=12	100.0 n=1

* due to rounding error

Table 10 indicates that teachers holding a doctorate don't consider interaction with departmental colleagues to be as important to them as it is to teachers holding a masters degree. This pattern was repeated in the responses to the next question which concerned the relative importance of interaction with persons at the college other than departmental colleagues.

Question #4

How important is it to you to have regular contact, exchange of views, or other forms of interaction with persons in the college other than your departmental colleagues?

(1) Very important

(2) Somewhat important

(3) Not too important

(4) Not at all important

Table 11

Importance of contact with other persons at the college

Importance	Percent
Very important	17.0
Somewhat important	48.9
Not too important	27.7
Not at all important	6.4
Total	100.0 n=47

Table 11 indicates that maintaining some form of interaction with persons other than immediate colleagues at the college is important to a significant number of teachers. Once again, however, there was an interesting difference in response to this question by level of education.

Table 12

Importance of contact with other persons at college

Importance	% BAs	% MAs	% PhDs	% Others
Very important	33.3%	16.1%	16.7%	
Somewhat important		61.3	25.0	100.0%
Not too important	66.7	22.6	33.3	
Not at all important			25.0	
Total	100.0 n=3	100.0 n=31	100.0 n=12	100.0 n=1

Table 12 indicates that while 77.4% of teachers with a Masters degree felt interaction with persons other than colleagues at the college was very important or somewhat important, only 41.7% of teachers with a doctorate felt that such interaction was very important or somewhat important. One might speculate as to the reasons for the differences in response to this question and the preceding one by educational level.

Some teachers with doctoral degrees may be reluctant to mix with colleagues who have not attained the same educational status. In the case of John Abbott, teachers holding a doctorate make up only 25% of the faculty.

Many Masters programs do not require a thesis or a prolonged independent research effort. There is less

isolation in such programs and more interaction with fellow students whereas the production of a PHD thesis often requires long hours of virtual solitude. This pattern may produce less need for interaction with colleagues.

As we have seen, teachers holding a PHD are more likely to be satisfied with their work as teachers than others at the college. One consequence may be that interaction with students is more important than interaction with colleagues in the same department or in the college at large.

Length of service may also be a factor here. New teachers tend to be more qualified than teachers hired when the Cegep system was first created. There simply has been less time for these newer people to make contact with others at the college.

Summary

With the exception of teachers holding a doctoral degree there appears to be widespread agreement among faculty as to the importance not only of interaction with departmental colleagues but also with persons in the college other than departmental colleagues. Further evidence of this was recently provided by an intense lobbying effort on the part of faculty organizations and committees for the building of a faculty lounge. It was argued that the provision of such a lounge would go a long way in overcoming a perceived sense of malaise, and feelings of isolation and marginalization among teachers at the college. The lobbying effort was ultimately successful as the college administration has agreed to provide such a lounge in the near future. The perception that malaise, isolation, and marginalization are problems affecting many teachers at John Abbott will be pursued in the interviews which follow.

Question #5

From your own experience, how would you characterize the motivation to learn of John Abbott students?

(1) Highly motivated

(2) Somewhat motivated

(3) Not very motivated

(4) Not at all motivated

The fifth and sixth questions in the survey attempted to gauge teachers perceptions of the motivations and abilities of their student clientele. The lack of student preparedness to undertake Cegep level work and what is perceived as a declining motivation to learn have been cited as factors contributing to teacher malaise. There is a perception on the part of some teachers (see the interviews which follow) that many students are living through profound disturbances in their families, in male/female relationships and in their work. These factors are becoming very important and seem to have a negative effect on the student's motivation to learn. Of particular concern is a perception that part-time jobs are becoming the most important element in many students lives. One consequence is a decline in student preparedness and motivation to learn, which makes a teacher's job more difficult. The purpose of questions 5 and 6 was to determine the extent to which student preparedness and motivation to learn are issues of concern to teachers at John Abbott College.

Table 13

Teachers' perceptions of student motivation to learn

Motivation	Percent
Highly motivated	6.4%
Somewhat motivated	74.5
Not very motivated	19.1
Total	100.0 n=47

Table 13 indicates that over 80% of the respondents to this survey find students to be highly motivated or somewhat motivated to learn. There were no significant differences in response to this question by categories of the independent variables. None of the respondents felt that students at the college were not at all motivated to learn. The findings suggest that the perception that students' motivation to learn is declining may be incorrect. However, in the interviews which follow, teachers express a considerable amount of ambiguity when asked to elaborate on this question.

Question #6

In your opinion, how well prepared are incoming John Abbott students to undertake Cegep level work?

(1) Well prepared

(2) Adequately prepared

(3) Not at all prepared

Table 14

Preparation of incoming students to undertake Cegep level work

Preparation	Percent
Well prepared	6.4%
Adequately prepared	44.7
Not well prepared	44.7
Not at all prepared	4.3
Total	100.0* n=47

* due to rounding error

Table 14 indicates that the respondents are about evenly divided in their opinions as to the preparedness of incoming students to undertake Cegep level work. There were interesting differences in response to this question by age category.

Table 15

Preparation of incoming students to undertake Cegep level work by age category

Preparation	%24 & under	%25-34	%35-44	%45-54	%55+
Well prepared			7.7%		33.3%
Adequately prepared	100.0%	75.0%	42.3	30.8%	66.7
Not well prepared		25.0	46.2	61.5	
Not at all prepared			3.8	7.7	
Total	100.0 n=1	100.0 n=4	100.0 n=26	100.0 n=13	100.0 n=3

Table 15 indicates that respondents in the 45-54 year old category were most likely to feel that incoming students were not well prepared to undertake Cegep level work. Teachers who had taught at the university level (58.6%) were also more likely to feel that incoming students were inadequately prepared to undertake Cegep level work compared to respondents (33.3%) who had never taught at the university level.

There were also some interesting differences in response to this question by discipline. Sixty-six point seven percent of teachers in the Social Sciences felt that incoming students are inadequately prepared (Social Science teachers make up 27.3% of the total sample)

whereas 80% of the teachers in English and Humanities felt that incoming students are adequately prepared (English and Humanities teachers combined make up 22.8% of the total sample). It is my opinion that the differences in response to this question by discipline relate to the nature of the student clientele that each group must deal with. English and Humanities courses are compulsory for all students at the Cegep. This means that teachers of these courses deal with students representing the complete range of motivation and ability. Social Science courses, on the other hand, are considered to be complementary and therefore draw on a narrower segment of the student body at the college. Internal documents at the school show that low achieving, low ability students tend to be disproportionately concentrated in the Social Science program. Students who are uncertain about their career choice also tend to gravitate towards the Social Science program. It is possible, therefore, that the nature of the student clientele accounts for the perception of Social Science teachers that incoming students are inadequately prepared to undertake Cegep level work.

Social Science teachers may also have higher expectations than English or Humanities teachers. However, it has been English teachers who have expressed the most concern in recent times about the writing

deficiencies of incoming students.

Question #7

Which of the following statements is closest to your own views on the issue?

(1) I would like to see admission standards raised at John Abbott

(2) I think the present admission standards at John Abbott are satisfactory

(3) Neither of the above statements on admission standards represents my own view

The purpose of question 7 was, once again, an attempt to gauge teachers' perceptions of student clientele. Admission standards have become an important issue because of what many teachers perceive as a tendency, on the part of local administration and the Provincial Ministry of Education, to blame them for the high rate of failures and drop-outs at the Cegep level. In the interviews which follow, teachers offer their own explanations for the high failure and drop-out rates, which include crowded classrooms, learning problems (arising from a linguistically and culturally heterogeneous student population), provincial government budget restraints, and the effects of students both holding a job and attending Cegep at the same time. A tighter student screening

process is seen by some teachers as the solution to these problems. However, this solution is opposed by other teachers who argue that tougher admission standards would undermine the very raison d'etre of the Cegep system, which was a commitment to increase accessibility to the education system for people who were previously excluded. At the core of this debate is a conflict over the nature and purpose of education. The organization of any educational system is determined largely by the prevailing ideas as to the way in which social mobility is to be achieved. The Parent reformers who proposed the creation of the Cegep system were determined to overcome what they saw as the social inequalities resulting from the previous elitist system of education. The Cegep would provide another opportunity for students, who might otherwise be marginalized, to stay in the educational system longer and perhaps discover aptitudes and skills that would enable them to experience upward social mobility. The admission standards have, therefore, been relatively lax in keeping with the commitment to greater equality of opportunity. However, this decision has important consequences for teachers who must be much more flexible and be able to adapt to a diversified student clientele. The stresses associated with trying to live up to these demands contribute to the phenomenon known as "burn-out".

Table 16

Viewpoint admission standards

Viewpoint	Percent
Raise standards	34.0%
Same standards as now	29.8
Neither of the two	36.2
Total	100.0 n=47

Table 16 indicates that the respondents are quite divided in their opinions on the issue of admission standards. There were interesting differences which emerged in the responses to this question by level of educational qualification, by age category, and by length of service at the college.

For example, 58.3% of teachers with a doctorate felt that standards should be raised in comparison to only 22.6% of teachers with masters degrees who felt the same way.

Older teachers were also more inclined to raise standards. Fifty-three point eight percent of teachers in the 45-54 age category as compared to 30.8% of those in the 35-44 age category and 25% in the 25-34 age category.

Teachers with longer years of service in the corps were also more inclined to raise standards. 53.9% of teachers with 15 or more years of service would raise standards in comparison to 27.3% with 11-15 years of service and 0 for teachers with 6-10 years of service.

It should be noted that in response to this question there were relatively large percentages of teachers who were unwilling to commit themselves one way or another on the issue (30-50% for most categories). This ambivalence over "standards" and evaluation in general is reflected in the intensive interviews which follow.

Summary (questions 5, 6, and 7)

Eighty percent of the respondents felt that students were motivated to learn. This suggests that any claim about widespread demoralization and loss of motivation on the part of students should be treated with caution. However, the teachers were much more divided in their response to the question of student preparedness to undertake Cegep level work. Slightly over half of the respondents felt that students are not well-prepared to face the demands of the Cegep environment. Interesting differences emerged in response to the question of student preparedness by age category, by previous teaching experience, and by discipline taught.

Teachers were also quite divided in their response to the question on admission standards with over a third of respondents unwilling to give a definitive opinion.

As will be shown in the intensive interviews which follow, the whole area of student motivation, student preparedness, admission standards, and evaluation procedures is a controversial topic among teachers which, in my opinion, reflects an underlying conflict over educational philosophy and methods, and the nature and purpose of education itself.

Question #8

Which of the following issues should be stressed the most when teachers negotiate a new collective agreement or contract?

(1) Salary and benefits (pension, insurance, etc.)

(2) Job security (tenure, lay-off provisions, etc.)

(3) Working conditions (workload, class size, etc.)

(4) Other

The purpose of question #8 was to gauge, indirectly, the effects of the provincial government decree (February, 1983), which abrogated teachers' right to strike until December 31, 1985, and which defined new working conditions that included a salary reduction of about 20%, an increase in the number of students per class (workload), and a reduction in salary protection for teachers who were made redundant due to declining enrollments. It also made the acquisition of tenure more difficult, as noted previously. In the interviews which follow, many teachers argue that the government's actions profoundly affected teacher morale resulting in a malaise which has continued to the present time.

There was a negotiated agreement in 1986 which provided a cost of living increase for teachers and some minor improvements on the decree. However, many teachers were dissatisfied with the result of the negotiations and

accused the unions (CSN, CEQ) of selling out to the government and essentially ratifying the conditions set by the decree of 1983. One byproduct of this discontent was the emergence of a dissident movement among teachers which favoured disaffiliation from the larger union central (CSN) and the formation of an independent Cegep teachers' federation. Eventually, in May of 1988, 14 of the 42 local teachers' unions affiliated with the CSN did break away to form an independent federation known as FAC (Federation Autonome Collegial). The effects of this process on teachers at John Abbott will be dealt with in the chapter which follows.

Question #8 is an attempt to determine the negotiating priorities of teachers as they try to make up for the losses experienced as a result of the provincial government actions of 1983. The response of teachers to this question might indicate which factor would be the most important in overcoming the malaise which is alleged to exist among the teachers at the college.

Table 17

Teachers' negotiating priorities

Priorities	Percent
Salary	40.4%
Job security	14.9
Working conditions	31.9
Other	12.8
Total	100.0 n=47

Table 17 indicates that salary should be the issue that is stressed the most in negotiations according to 40.4% of the respondents. 59.6% of the respondents chose non-salary related issues as the most important negotiating priorities. There were some interesting differences which emerged in response to this question by sex.

Table 18

Teachers negotiating priorities by sex

Priorities	% Male	% Female
Salary	46.9%	26.7%
Job security	9.4	26.7
Working conditions	34.4	26.7
Other	9.4	20.0
Total	100.1* n=32	100.1* n=15

*due to rounding error

Table 18 indicates that salary is a more important negotiating priority for male respondents than for female respondents. Over 80% of female respondents chose non-salary related issues as the most important negotiating priorities. The response to this question by sex is quite similar to the response to the first question of the survey concerning teachers' priorities should they consider a job other than teaching. Some of the same explanations offered to account for the differences in response to that question may also be at work here. Again, job security is an important issue for female respondents whereas it is not an issue of importance for males. Working conditions are an important negotiating priority for both sexes, which suggest that the effects of

the government decree concerning increased workload (due to larger class size norms) are being felt by teachers. This concern over working conditions, particularly increased class size, will be pursued further in the interviews which follow.

Other Findings

Not surprisingly, job security is the most important issue for non-tenured respondents, two out of three choosing the job security category.

Working conditions should be the most important negotiating priority according to 53.8% of respondents in the 45-54 year old age category compared to 26.9% of those in the 34-44 age category and 25% of those in the 25-35 age category.

Sixty-nine point two percent of teachers with 15 or more years of service at the college chose salary as the most important negotiating priority compared to 31.8% of teachers with 11-15 years of service and 42.9% of teachers with 6-10 years of service. Salary was not an important issue for any of the respondents with five years or less of service (8.5% of the total sample).

Salary may be an important issue for those with fifteen or more years of service because of the nature of the pay scale for teachers in Quebec. Up until fifteen years of service teachers are paid extra money for each additional year of service. This stops at fifteen years with teachers only able to increase their salary after that through cost of living adjustments, negotiated

increases in pay, or through the acquisition of additional scholarity if they have not completed their PHD. This ceiling was an attempt to reduce the disparity in incomes between the lowest and the highest paid teachers but for those at the top end of the scale it has become a source of frustration.

Working conditions are the most important issue which should be stressed in negotiations for teachers who have had some teaching experience at private schools. None of the teachers who had formerly taught at private schools (14.9% of the total sample) chose salary as the most important issue which should be stressed at negotiations.

Question #9

If you had it in your power to chage any aspect of life at John Abbott, in which general area would you make the most changes? Choose one only.

(1) Administration policy

(2) Union policy

(3) Pedagogical policy

(4) Department policy

The purpose of question #9 was to determine the most important sources of potential conflict within the institutional environment. Many teachers were not satisfied simply circling a response to this question. They also provided written comments in the space provided, some of which are reprinted in the survey comments which follow.

Table 19

Area in which teachers would make changes

General area	Percent
Administration policy	55.3%
Union policy	2.1
Pedagogical policy	36.2
Department policy	6.4
Total	100.0 n=47

Table 19 indicates that 55.3% of respondents chose administration policy as the area in which they would make the most changes if they had the chance. In both the survey comments and the intensive interviews which follow, teachers express a concern that the local administration is increasingly out of touch with the needs of both students and teachers. For example, one respondent argued that "the bureaucracy has increased because of the higher student enrollments. The administration seems to be trying to solve the problems by the creation of more rules. This is not the way to solve problems." The perception that relations with the administration had become strained because of the increase in student numbers and the consequent proliferation of bureaucratic rules and regulations is a recurring theme in the interviews which follow.

Seventy-five percent of teachers with doctorates singled out administration policy as the area in which they would make the most changes in comparison to 48.4% of teachers with Masters degrees who chose that category and 33.3% of teachers with bachelors degrees. Forty-one point nine percent of teachers with masters degrees chose pedagogical policy as the area in which they would make the most changes as compared to 25% of teachers with PHDs who chose this category.

Seventy-five percent of 25-34 year old teachers were most interested in making changes in administration policy compared to 65.4% of 34-44 year olds and 46.2% of 45-54 year olds.

Pedagogical concerns seemed to be more important to teachers over 45 (46.2% of 45-54 year olds chose this category and 100% of teachers over 55 years of age) compared to those in the 35-44 age bracket (23.1% who chose pedagogical policy) and 25-34 age bracket (25% of whom chose pedagogical policy).

Administration policy and pedagogical policy were the two general areas in which teachers of both sexes, all ages, all levels of scholarity and service, and from all departments would like to make changes if they had the chance. Department policy and union policy were not singled out by any category as important areas in which they would make changes. The fact that union policy was not chosen as an area in which teachers would make changes is something of an anomaly considering the importance of this issue in the intensive interviews which follow.

Summary (questions 8 and 9)

Salary and working conditions are the most important negotiating priority for teachers attempting to recover from the losses experienced during the 1983 strike. Salary is a much more important negotiating priority for males than for females. Salary, working conditions, and job security are of equal importance to females as negotiating priorities. Job security is the most important negotiating priority for non-tenured teachers. For teachers with 15 or more years of service salary is the most important negotiating priority probably because of the structure of the salary scale for Cegep teachers.

Administration policy appears to be the area in which teachers would make the most changes if they had the chance. Surprisingly, union policy would not be an area in which teachers would make changes even though the local union's affiliation with the CSN is a major source of conflict at the college. The teachers' concerns over both administration policy and pedagogical policy will be pursued in depth in the interviews which follow.

APPENDIX

Teacher Survey

You are one of about seventy-five teachers chosen at random from the seniority list to receive this questionnaire. I will be contacting you by phone some time within the next two weeks to discuss it with you. My name is Walter Johnson and I teach in the Humanities department.

Please answer each question by circling the number of the answer which best describes your personal views. Do not write your name or in any other way identify yourself unless you choose to do so. Any additional comments or suggestions about the reasons for the survey or the questions asked are welcome. Cynicism, sarcasm, wit, yes, even humour, are appreciated by the researcher.

Thank you for your cooperation.

* Please return the completed questionnaire to Walter Johnson, Humanities Department via the internal mail.

1. If you were going to take a job other than teaching, which of the following would be the most important factor in your consideration?
   1) higher pay and better benefits
   2) more interesting work
   3) more security
   4) more respect and recognition
   5) Other: _____

2. Which of the following activities provides you with the most satisfaction? One answer only please.
   1) your work as a teacher
   2) non-teaching related activities at the college
   3) community or political involvements outside the college
   4) hobbies, sideline jobs, exercise (other than sex), reading, courses, travel, or other such activities outside the college

3. How important is it to you to have regular contact, exchange of views, or other forms of interaction with your departmental colleagues?
   1) very important
   2) somewhat important
   3) not too important
   4) not at all important

4. How important is it to you to have regular contact, exchange of views, or other forms of interaction with persons in the college other than your departmental colleagues?

   1) very important
   2) somewhat important
   3) not too important
   4) not at all important

5. From your own experience, how would you characterize the motivation to learn of John Abbott students?

   1) highly motivated
   2) somewhat motivated
   3) not very motivated
   4) not at all motivated

6. In your opinion, how well prepared are in-coming John Abbott students to undertake CEGEP level work?

   1) well prepared
   2) adequately prepared
   3) not well prepared
   4) not all prepared

7. Which of the following statements is closest to your own views on the issue?

   1) I would like to see admission standards raised at John Abbott

2) I think that the present admission standards at John Abbott are satisfactory

3) Neither of the above statements on admission standards represents my own view

Comment: _____

8. Which of the following issues should be stressed the most when teachers negotiate a new collective agreement or contract?

1) salary and benefits (pension, insurance, sick leave, etc.)

2) job security (tenure, lay-off provisions, recall provisions, etc.)

3) working conditions (workload, class size, health and safety, etc.)

4) Other: _____

9. If you had it in your power to change any aspect of life at John Abbott, in which general area would you make the most changes? Choose one only.

1) administration policy

2) union policy

3) pedagogical policy

4) department policy

Comment: _____

_____

10. Are you

    1) male

    2) female

11. Are you currently

    1) permanent (tenured)

    2) non-permanent (non-tenured)

12. What is your level of educational attainment? Last <u>completed</u> degree.

    1) Bachelors

    2) Masters

    3) Doctorate

    4) Technical certification/ and or career experience without academic degree

13. In which of the following age categories do you belong?

    1) 24 and under

    2) 25 - 34

    3) 35 - 44

    4) 45 - 54

    5) 55 or over

14. How long have you been teaching at the CEGEP level?

    1) 0 - 5 years

    2) 6 - 10 years

    3) 11 - 15 years

    4) 15 or more years

15. Have you ever taught at any other educational level other than CEGEP? YOu may circle more than one answer to this question if necessary.

    1) elementary
    2) high school
    3) university
    4) private school
    5) technical school

16. In which general area does your own discipline lie?

    1) Business science (including secretarial, computer science)
    2) Dramatic and creative arts (fine arts, theatre, music, etc.)
    3) English
    4) Health science (dental, nursing, nutrition, etc.)
    5) Humanities (philosophy, religion)
    6) Mathematics
    7) Natural or physical sciences
    8) Other languages (other than English)
    9) Physical science
    10) Social science
    11) Technology (police and correctional)
    12) Technology (Energy, aircraft maintenance, surveying and drafting, Documentation, etc.)

Comments or suggestions:

Survey Comments

In response to some of the questions in the survey questionnaire many of the teachers were not simply content to circle the response which best described their own personal view. They wrote in comments in an attempt to elaborate on certain issues. What follows is a brief review of some of the comments made by the teachers in response to certain of the issues raised.

On the usefulness of the questionnaire

"I find questionnaires to be rather reductive. How can you quantify states of mind, emotion, anxiety, intellectual skills, etc."

On being a teacher

"Teachers must learn how to teach."

"A massive review of course content and teachers' skills and qualifications is required. Too many 'joke classes' and ill-taught, limited teachers, not to mention the glorified office boy administrators. Also, the union is off in a world of its own."

"For the most part I have no quarrel with this job at all. I can't think of any I would trade it for."

"More challenge needed."

"More respect and recognition is needed especially from the media, the administration, the government, and society."

"As human beings we need self-awareness, self-esteem, communication. We need workshops and intensives for teachers, administration, students. We need funds and resources for nurturing spirits and aligning groups, then train, teach, and deliver the skills."

"We need support for education, upping the priority of quality education."

"We need monetary recognition for excellence."

"I feel I'm paid generously now, but, of course, I could always use more money. Otherwise, this job is great. All of the other factors are excellent."

<u>On admission standards</u>

"Primary and secondary levels are failing to teach students fundamental skills and concepts (writing, mathematics, logical thinking), so more and more preliminary/introductory, preparatory work is being done at the junior college level. Raising standards is irrelevant if high schools fail to educate."

"Students' preparation to undertake Cegep level work depends upon their language background."

"I don't know anything about admission standards."

"We take the top 700 students into the sciences - we don't have any admission standards."

"Admission standards have nothing to do with it. Make teaching an important function in society and standards will rise and we will not be turning out educational cripples at any level of the educational process."

"I think that the present admission standards at John Abbott are adequate given the prevailing social and cultural standards."

"The Science standard is too low. Social Science too. The rest is o.k."

"There are inadequate facilities for helping weak ESL (English as second language) students."

"I would like to see admission by program and some advanced programs for those students who can accept the challenge with appropriate recognition of the fact that they took these advanced programs."

"I would like to see educational standards raised in the elementary and high schools."

"I would like to see public education standards raised so that students coming in to us can read, add, subtract, and even understand more complex problems such as fractions."

"Weak math! Poor English skills!"

"It's a psycotherapy problem. Most have the ability. It's that they are resigned, passive, lifeless ..... hence unmotivated. The spirits of the young people should be somehow better nourished, before they can learn truly effectively."

"Students need more support for adjustment to necessary acquisition of study skills to meet new academic demands."

"I think we probably have too many students for the physical facility here, so raising standards might cut fat back, but really a change in standards is what I'd like to see, admissions based on goals, desire to take the programs here, and a course contract rather than marks or intelligence aptitude or whatever."

"Admission standards are not the problem. The lack of support staff is the problem. We need remedial specialists, second language specialists, etc., etc."

On student motivation

"I believe students should be able to add courses as well as drop courses. Students should be able to take a lighter load as well. In other words more flexibility for the student. Some of the opinions on students being ill-prepared may be due to the heavy load they are taking. I think the advice - register for a full load then drop is cynical and does not help the average student take responsibility for his or her decisions."

"Students are highly motivated considering the shopping center approach to education that has developed over the years."

"I don't think John Abbott students are any more or less motivated than I was at their age."

On respect and recognition for teachers

"Individual teachers who are not creative and productive should be evaluated and let go if there is no improvement."

"I am sure that we have a number of unhappy instructors at John Abbott."

"I don't expect to get this from teaching in this society, particularly in my subject." (teacher - dramatic and creative arts)

On contact with departmental colleagues

"We need a faculty lounge."

"Important to have contacts because of internal politics."

"We said it before, we'll say it again. We get nowhere."

"It's very important, but it seldom happens."

"It would be nice to see people around other than when they are in a class behind closed doors."

"It's not so important but I'm always pleased when it happens."

On the Collective agreement

"Do we really need 65 different pay scales? Three will do nicely. Do we need 19 priority candidates for a poste? (permanent job) Then a charge? (replacement position) Is there anyone who understands the parental leave provisions? The workload formula?"

"The complexity of the contract rivals that of the income tax act - no wonder individuals feel alienated."

"Simplification - any new collective agreement should be a maximum of ten pages in length and in clear English."

"Money is the only thing worth worrying about."

"I don't think the private sector could afford much better benefits. Only our government can afford that."

"We should have some mechanism to evaluate the quality of work performed by all the groups - teachers, administration, support staff."

On the union

"Teachers should belong to a professional association and stay out of the labour movement which has lost much of its credibility with the public."

"Expletive deleted the union."

On administration policy

"Administration policy appears to have self-aggrandizement as its first priority, relegating the needs of teachers and students to mere afterthoughts."

"The biblical flood is around the corner - we are about to drown in a tidal wave of policy. We should build an ark and populate it with a pair of the world's largest paper

shredders."

"Personally, I don't spend any time thinking about political issues."

"Redefine the mission of the institution. Create incentives for adult-ed development."

"Make contact with the departments."

"The administration should concern itself with the design of classrooms and the resources for use in the classroom."

"The administration should recognize education as our first and only priority."

"Firing incompetents should be easy. As it is, the administration and the union agree never to fire anyone."

"Scrap human resources department. Clean out swamps of leeches such as name and expletive deleted and name and expletive deleted. Send name and expletive deleted to Siberia to count snowflakes."

"Expletive deleted those expletive deleted."

Miscellaneous-comments

"How curious you should make an exception of this (exercise other than sex). Sex is the only means by

which the powerless and stifled either experience power (depending upon the nature of the sex) or a sense of release from anxiety. Sex is a form of panacea, an opiate of the masses. In a sexually obsessed society like ours, there's little possibility that government need change. Give them sex (or porn) and thereby sabotage the revolution."

"There are only two flaws in what I consider to be the best teaching position in this country:

1. We don't have our students long enough to develop the pastoral side of teaching.
2. The built-in adversarial nature of a system where the administration does not come from the teaching ranks and rotate back into it."

"Students aren't prepared to undertake Cegep level work but standards in teaching have become pathetic."

"Students are somewhat more motivated in the Technology programs."

"Philosophy students are more motivated than Humanities students."

"We need more liberal arts courses."

"Are you 1. male, 2. female. This question is out of place in our sexless society!"

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